

SITUATION REPORT NO. 15
INCIDENT NO. 2001- 005
DATE: April 19, 2001 TIME: 12:00 p.m.

TO: Governor John Hoeven
State Capitol
Bismarck, N.D. 58505

1. NATURE OF DISASTER: Spring Flooding.
2. DEATHS AND INJURIES: No change from previous reports.
3. DAMAGES: The potential exists for additional precipitation in the Red River Valley later today and through this weekend. National Weather Service (NWS) forecasters expect a storm system will move through the area on April 19-20, bringing approximately one-quarter to one-half inch of rain. A second storm system that is forecasted for this weekend may have a more significant impact on the area, possibly bringing up to one inch, depending on its track and speed.

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) plans to maintain releases from the White Rock Dam on Lake Traverse at 3,500 cubic feet per second (cfs) through April 27. Inflow into the lake is decreasing and nearing outflow levels.

The Red River at Wahpeton measured 14.57 feet today, a 0.09-foot decrease during the past 24 hours. The river at Fargo measured 33.02 feet, a 0.97-foot decrease during the past 24 hours. The level at Grand Forks measured 43.46 feet, a 0.39 -foot decrease. Meanwhile, the river at Drayton was nearing its crest, measuring 41.31 feet, a 0.97-foot increase during the past 24 hours. At Pembina, the river was at 48.3 feet, a 0.53-foot increase during the past 24 hours. A river crest of 49.5 to 50 feet is expected on April 21-23.

An April 18 Long-Range Probabilistic Outlook, issued by the NWS, indicates there is a 50 percent chance Devils Lake will crest level at Creel Bay at 1,448.1 feet, which represents a 0.2-foot decrease from last month's outlook. An analysis by State Water Commission engineers points out that approximately 10,000 additional acres around Devils Lake would be flooded if the lake level rises to 1,448.1 feet. Approximately 37,000 acre-feet could flow from Devils Lake to Stump Lake and flood 500 acres near Stump Lake by the end of the year, based on a peak of 1,448.1 feet and following inflow and evaporation patterns similar to the average since 1993. The additional water could cause Stump Lake to rise five feet, which does not take into account local inflow. The analysis also assumes that roads across the channel between Devils Lake and Stump Lake do not cause significant head loss. This spring, Stump Lake has risen nearly one foot from local inflow. The level measured 1,410.8 feet on April 18. Devils Lake has risen from 1,446.14 feet in early March to 1,446.70 feet as of April 19.

An April 19 report by the N.D. Department of Transportation indicates that four locations on state highways remain closed because of floodwaters. Those locations include: N.D. Highway 66, mile marker 138 to the Red River; N.D. Highway 5, mile marker 335 to the Red River; U.S. Highway 81, between Columbia and Bacon Roads in Grand Forks; and N.D. Highway 11, from Fairmount to the Red River. Highways with water on the roadways and where traffic is allowed include four locations: N.D. Highway 54, from I-29 to Oslo; N.D. Highway 14, approximately 4.5 miles south of Anamoose; N.D. Highway 36 at mile marker 34, four miles west of Tuttle; and N.D. Highway 200 at mile marker 257, west of Chaseley. DOT officials anticipate that floodwaters may soon inundate N.D. Highway 3 at mile marker 132.

4. RESOURCES:

LOCAL: No change from previous reports.

STATE: No change from previous reports.

FEDERAL: No change from previous reports.

5. VOLUNTEER ACTION: The American Red Cross plans to distribute cleanup kits to residents in the Red River Basin. Operational responsibilities are transitioning from the national to the local level.

In Cass County, organizations that checked the status and needs of people in flooded areas included the Argusville Fire Department, the Emergency Vehicle Assistance Communications (EVAC) and the Harwood Fire Department.

6. MAJOR ACTIONS: The N.D. Department of Health issued a news release on April 18 recommending disinfecting and bacteriological testing of private water wells that may have been inundated by the floodwaters. Because flooded wells may be contaminated with harmful bacteria that can cause illness, well owners are urged to contact the N.D. Department of Health's Division of Water Quality, their local public health unit or a certified water well contractor.

7. ASSISTANCE NEEDED: No additional requests have been received.

8. OUTSIDE HELP ON SCENE: No change from previous reports.

9. OTHER: Appropriate state and local emergency operations plans have been implemented.

Situation Reports published by North Dakota Emergency Management are posted on the Division's Internet home page. The address is <http://www.state.nd.us/dem>.

Douglas C. Friez, State Director